

William Fairfax to George Washington, September 3, 1756, Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers. Published by the Society of the Colonial Dames of America. Edited by Stanislaus Murray Hamilton.

FROM WILLIAM FAIRFAX, ESQ.

ALEXANDRIA, 3d Septr. 1756

DR SIR

On Monday the 30th. August past We held here a Council of War and had the single Men present drawn up in a Line and being askt if any inclined voluntarily to enter into his Majesty's Service, None offering We proceeded to call over the Lists given in by the respective Captains whereby above Sixty not appearing and no reasonable Excuse made for their Non attendance I have issued Warrants to have them apprehended to be deliver'd to such Officer You may appoint to receive them at Mr Wm. West's¹—I hope it is more than probable that some may be taken, Secur'd and carried to Mr West's and You may think proper to Send an Officer Wth in ten Days for that Purpose, I am concern'd to see a great Unwillingness in our young Men to enlist, especially as most of Them appear'd yesterday in the Field almost naked and in a poor Condition—For particulars referr to Mr Kirkpatrick.

Wishing You every Consolation I remain Yr affecte. & obedt. Servt. W: FAIRFAX

¹ The act of Assembly for drafting militia had authorized the holding of a council of war of the field officers and captains of militia of the different counties; which council of war was to enter the names of all able-bodied single men in their respective muster rolls upon a written list, and to appoint a day upon which these men were required to be present at the court house, where another council of war was to be held, and each of these men, who refused voluntarily to enlist, should be represented by a slip of paper; on each twentieth slip was to be written,

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"This obliges me immediately to enter his Majesty's service." These slips were then to be put into a box, and every man compelled to draw therefrom.